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MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JAMES MANNING, D. D.

FIRST PRESIDENT OF BROWN UNIVERSITY.

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IN EXCHANGE
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF SOME OF HIS PUPILS.

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MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES MANNING, D. D.

FIRST PRESIDENT OF BROWN UNIVERSITY. *

A CENTURY has elapsed since the birth of Dr. Manning, and nearly half that portion of time since his death. Few, very few, of his contemporaries are now among the living upon earth. Not one of those liberal and enlightened friends of piety and learning, who helped to lay the foundations of Rhode Island College, and not one of the original members of its Corporation, forty-eight in number, are now alive to lend the aid of their recollections to this endeavor to place on record a few memorials of the life and character of James Manning. Of the Professors associated with him, the venerable Dr. Waterhouse,† of Cambridge, Ms., is the only survivor; and of the Tutors, all except the Hon. Asher Robbins,‡ of New-

* This institution was incorporated as "The College or University in the English Colony of Rhode Island;" and was, in common parlance, denominated Rhode Island College, till the year 1804, when, in consequence of a liberal donation from the Hon. Nicholas Brown, of Providence, the Corporation determined that it should "be called, in all future time, by the name of BROWN UNIVERSITY."

† This gentleman, distinguished in the medical history of our country, as "the American Jenner," was born in Newport, R. I. His father, originally a Presbyterian, embraced the religious opinions of the Society of Friends, after he had reached mature life; and to those opinions he remained sincerely attached, till his death, at an advanced age. His son, to borrow his own language, "was born and educated in the principles of liberal Quakerism." He has, however, it is believed, never adopted the peculiarities of that quiet and useful sect, nor has he, for many years, been accustomed to unite with them in their religious worship. Dr. Waterhouse never received a collegiate education; but few of our countrymen have been more frequently honored by distinctions from literary and scientific bodies, at home and abroad. That his early academical training was not neglected, is evident from his various publications, some of which evince a familiarity with the learned languages. He was a pupil of the celebrated Dr. Fothergill, of London, and he subsequently pursued his medical studies at the famous schools of Edinburgh and Leyden. From the Leyden school, he received the degree of Doctor in Medicine. In 1783, he was appointed Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in Harvard University, and he continued to perform the duties of that Chair, for the period of nearly thirty years. This was among the earliest medical schools established in our country; and of the original Professors, Dr. Waterhouse alone survives. From 1782 to 1795, Dr. Waterhouse was a member of the Board of Fellows of Rhode Island College, and, in that capacity, he seldom failed to attend its annual Commencements. In 1784, he was elected Professor of Natural History in the same institution, and, while occupying this chair, he delivered, in the State-house in Providence, the first course of lectures upon that science ever delivered in the United States. The benevolent and intrepid agency of Dr. Waterhouse in introducing vaccination into this country, is too fresh in the public recollection, to need more than this passing allusion. Among the works which he has published, may be noted, more particularly, an elaborate and ingenious essay, in one octavo volume, which is intended to show that Lord Chatam was the author of the celebrated Letters of Junius.—Dr. Waterhouse, we are pleased to add, is still living; and, though he is far advanced in the vale of life, his spirits are cheerful, and his mind is gratefully occupied in those intellectual pursuits to which, in the more active seasons of life, he was devoted.

‡ This early friend and official associate of Dr. Manning was born in Connecticut, and was graduated at Yale College in 1782. Soon after he had completed his collegiate education, he was elected a Tutor in Rhode Island College. While, for the term of seven years, he was thus occupied in quickening the diligence of his pupils, and in imbuing their minds with a genuine relish for the varied forms of classical beauty, he sought every opportunity to cultivate his own taste for the classics, and, indeed, for every species of elegant learning. After resigning his Tutorship, he studied law under the late Hon. William

port, R. I., are departed. These impressive facts are here stated, not so much to inculcate a lesson of moral wisdom, as to anticipate objections to which this sketch of Dr. Manning may be liable, from its deficiency in minute information, and in discriminating estimate of character. In connection with these facts, it should, for the same reason, be added, that Dr. Manning never published any of the productions of his mind, except a Baccalaureate Address, and that, with the exception of one or two familiar letters, he left nothing in manuscript. From scattered and unavoidably imperfect sources must, therefore, be collected all the particulars which can now be obtained respecting this remarkable man, and (in reference to Rhode Island) this eminent pioneer in the cause of science and letters.

Dr. JAMES MANNING was born in Elizabethtown, N. J., October 22, 1738. Concerning his remote ancestors, it is now too late to obtain authentic information. His parents are said to have been substantial and pious people; and, from the skill in husbandry which their son exhibited, it is inferred that they were proprietors and cultivators of the soil. To them and to the village school, was young Manning indebted for his first lessons in the elementary branches of learning. To parental counsel and example was he also indebted for those principles of right conduct, and those cultivated moral sensibilities, which saved his youth from frivolity and vice, and which, ere he had ripened into manhood, God was pleased, through the influence of his Spirit, to crown with the beauty of Christian holiness. At what age he became the subject of peculiar religious impressions, is not known; but it is known that, before he had attained his majority, he solemnly consecrated himself to the service of God.

In the year 1756, the Rev. Isaac Eaton, opened an Academy at Hopewell, N. J. "for the education of youth for the ministry." To Mr. Eaton belongs the high honor of being the first American Baptist to establish a seminary for the literary and theological education of those young men who embraced the doctrines of his sect, and designed, ultimately, to preach them. In this seminary, young Manning pursued those branches of mathematical and classical learning which, at that time, were required for admission into our American colleges.

At the age of about twenty, he entered Princeton College, then, as now, one of the most distinguished literary institutions in the country. Of his collegiate life few memorials have reached the present day. It passed on, probably without striking incident, from its commencement to its close, in the pursuit of high intellectual aims, and in the cultivation of a well-formed moral character. He graduated in 1762, with, it is said, the highest honors of his class. This class consisted of twenty, and was somewhat eminent for its scholarship. The distinction conferred upon young Manning

Channing, of Newport, and, at that time, the Attorney-General of Rhode Island. Mr. Robbins established himself at Newport in the practice of the law, and there he has ever since resided. In his profession, he soon attained a high rank, as a well-read lawyer, and as an advocate gifted, in no humble measure, with powers of luminous, acute and logical argumentation. For the last fourteen years, he has represented, with acknowledged ability, the State of Rhode Island in the Senate of the United States. In the debates of that body he has not often participated; but on no occasion has he addressed the Senate, without leaving upon the minds of all who heard him a decided impression of his high intellectual powers and accomplishments—of his ability as a statesman and his acquisitions as a scholar. To the ancient classics, the Greek more especially, he is still ardently attached; and, during the intervals of relaxation from public toil, it is his selectest pleasure to commune with those immortal minds who have bequeathed to the world the richest treasures of thought and the most exquisite models of style. While politicians of coarser mould busy themselves in fomenting the rude strifes of party, Mr. Robbins, from the impulse of a purer taste, when public duty does not forbid the indulgence, addresses himself to the gorgeous fictions of Homer or to the unsurpassed orations of Demosthenes. In the year 1835, the Fellows of Brown University manifested their sense of Mr. Robbins's talents, as a civilian, by conferring upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws. We lament that such a man, so fitted to temper the violence of political controversy, is about to retire to private life. May the declining years of this veteran scholar be cheered by the best consolations; and may his sun, now verging towards its setting, linger, yet longer, above the horizon.

provoked some discontent among his ambitious compeers, who could not, however, have been the most impartial judges of his merit or their own.*

Soon after he had completed his collegiate course, he was settled as the pastor of a Baptist church in Morristown, N. J. At that time, theological seminaries, richly endowed, and furnished with valuable libraries and a corps of learned Professors, were quite unknown in our country. Young men were then prepared for the duties of the ministry, chiefly under the superintendence of clergymen who had made themselves known by their attainments in theological science, or who were celebrated for their eloquent exhibitions of truth from the pulpit. The sentiment, so beautifully expressed by Dr. South—that “the Spirit always guides and *instructs* before he *saves*; and as he brings to *happiness*, only by the ways of *holiness*, so he never leads to true holiness but by the paths of *knowledge*,”—then commanded an assent by no means universal. The Baptists have since adopted an elevated standard for the education of Christian ministers; but, in the days of Dr. Manning, they had made but slender provision for the professional training of their clergy. That excellent man, it is, therefore, not unfair to presume, engaged in his pastoral duties, with no pretensions to theological erudition or to polemical skill; but he was endowed with what is far better—with the spirit of Christian gentleness and Christian wisdom. In powers of severe analysis and comprehensive generalization, he may have been deficient; but he was rich in cultivated tastes, sympathies, and affections. He had learned from the Bible and from the experience of his own heart, how to touch the moral sensibilities of his hearers, and he addressed himself to the work, with apostolical simplicity and fervor. Even in the first stages of his ministry, he was, as a preacher, highly acceptable. He was invited to become the pastor of the Baptist church in his native town, but this invitation, though a pressing one, he felt it his duty to decline. Soon afterwards, he travelled through several of the colonies, to ascertain the actual state of religion, and to prepare himself for more extended usefulness, by a larger acquaintance with men and manners. No record is left to indicate the extent, or to exhibit the incidents of his journey.

On the 23d of March, 1763, Dr. Manning was united in marriage to Miss Margaret Stites, daughter of John Stites, Esq. of Elizabethtown. With this excellent woman, he lived, most happily, till his death. She survived him many years, and, after a long and solitary widowhood, never having known the pleasures of maternity, she died in Providence, R. I., November 9, 1815, aged seventy-five years.

His connection with the church at Morristown was of short duration; for, it would seem that, towards the close of the year 1763, he accepted an invitation from the Baptist church in Warren, R. I., to become their pastor. Soon after his ordination, he opened a Latin school in that town. Respecting his course of life, when he thus discharged the duties of a classical teacher and a village pastor, we have no information to impart. The praise of laborious diligence and of accurate knowledge in the business of instruction may, without hazard, be claimed for him; and the reluctance with which he parted from his beloved people—a reluctance which even the prospect of more enlarged usefulness and a more conspicuous station could not overcome—is no equivocal evidence of his affectionate, faithful, and disinterested ministrations. The compensation, which he received for his various labors at Warren, was barely sufficient

* The degree of Doctor in Divinity was conferred upon Mr. Manning, by the University of Pennsylvania, but in what year we have, in vain, endeavored to ascertain.

for his support. While, however, his outward man was thus a stranger to the luxurious accommodations of life, his inner man was sustained by the ennobling consciousness that he lived not in vain;—that he was treading, with cheerful alacrity, the path of appointed trial; and that, through his agency, multitudes were becoming wiser and better, for time and for eternity. On this passage in the life of Dr. Manning, it is delightful to dwell. It is delightful to turn aside from scenes of political ambition and ecclesiastical turbulence which now mar our peace, and to repose, for a while, upon a by-gone example of unaffected humility, of quiet duty, and confiding prayer. He had been elected President of Rhode Island College; and the future prosperity of that institution was thought to depend on its removal to Providence. So affectionately desirous, however, was Dr. Manning of the people of his care, many of whom had, through his instrumentality, experienced the transforming efficacy of the religion of Christ, that he could not find it in his heart to leave them. To avoid a separation so painful to his sensibilities, he even proposed to resign the elevated station to which he had just been appointed. To this proposition his influential friends would not listen, and they persuaded him to abandon all thought of resigning the Presidentship. While we are compelled to think that his final decision was a wise one, we honor the feelings which well nigh betrayed his judgment. Under similar circumstances, how few men would have faltered; how few would have sought to renounce the pathway to literary and social distinction, for the unambitious career of a village pastor!

We have already alluded to Dr. Manning as the President of Rhode Island College. It now remains to trace his history, in connection with that of the institution of which he may be considered as the founder, and over which he so long, and with such signal ability, presided.

Although, according to Morgan Edwards, the College was projected in 1762, by the Philadelphia Baptist Association; yet we have no reason for believing that this or any other ecclesiastical body is entitled to the praise of being considered its founder. The original conception may have come from the Philadelphia Association, but the credit of moulding this conception into a plan, and of carrying into execution that plan, would seem to belong to Dr. Manning. In an obituary notice written by the Hon. David Howell, his contemporary and official associate,* and published in the Providence Gazette, a few days after the death of Dr. Manning, he is, without qualification, designated "as the founder of the College." The

* The Hon. David Howell, LL. D., was born in New Jersey, January 1, 1747 (O. S.) and graduated at Princeton, in the year 1766. He subsequently removed to Providence, R. I. where he continued to reside till his death, in 1824, at the age of seventy-seven years. During a large portion of his protracted life, he was connected with the College in Rhode Island. For three years, he was a Tutor, and the first ever appointed in that institution; for nine years, Professor of Natural Philosophy; for thirty-four years, Professor of Law; for fifty-two years, a member of the Board of Fellows; and, for many years, Secretary of the Corporation. Except, however, as a Tutor, we have never heard that he participated in the ordinary duties of academical instruction. Though abundantly competent to the task, he never delivered, as we have reason to know, any lectures while he filled the chair of Professor of Law. After President Manning's decease, Judge Howell, at the request of the Corporation, presided at two of the Commencements of the College. On both occasions, he delivered to the graduating class, Baccalaureate Addresses, which, as specimens of undefiled English and excellent counsel, were deservedly admired. He practised law in Providence for many years, and was among the most eminent members of the Rhode Island Bar. Under the Confederation, he was a member of Congress from that State, and he subsequently filled, with great ability, several high offices, civil and judicial. In 1812, he was appointed United States Judge for the District of Rhode Island, and this office he sustained till his death. Judge Howell was endowed with extraordinary talents, and he superadded to his endowments extensive and accurate learning. As an able jurist, he established for himself a solid reputation. He was, however, yet more distinguished as a keen and brilliant wit, and as a scholar extensively acquainted not only with the ancient, but with several of the modern languages. As a pungent and effective political writer, he was almost unrivalled; and, in conversation, whatever chance he had the theme, whether politics or law—literature or theology—grammar or criticism—a Greek tragedy, or a difficult problem in Mathematics, Judge Howell was never found wanting. Upon all occasions which made any demands upon him, he gave the most convincing evidence of the vigor of his powers, and of the variety and extent of his erudition.

opinion of the Hon. Asher Robbins is in accordance with the statement of Judge Howell. In a letter to the author, Mr. Robbins remarks: "The College, I believe, was the project of Dr. Manning, and his motive was to give to the Baptist churches a learned clergy. And this, I have no doubt, was the motive to the liberal patronage of the opulent men in Providence, of that persuasion." Morgan Edwards, in his manuscript History of Rhode Island, states that, in the year 1763, Dr. Manning recommended to several influential Baptist gentlemen, assembled at Newport, the project of establishing "a seminary of polite literature, subject to the government of the Baptists." The project was favorably received, and Dr. Manning was requested to present a plan of the proposed institution. With this request he complied, and the plan which he had prepared was approved. After some delay, the causes of which are left for the future historian of the College to relate, a charter for the institution was, in the year 1764, obtained from the legislature of the colony of Rhode Island. The original corporators, of whom Dr. Manning was one, were prominent and influential men. Among the laymen, (and they composed a large majority,) were the Hon. Stephen Hopkins, and the Hon. William Ellery, illustrious as signers of the Declaration of American Independence;—the former, distinguished for his vigorous powers and his extensive information, especially in political science; the latter, distinguished, not only for his endowments, but for his philosophical spirit and the graces of elegant scholarship. The influence of these men and of their coadjutors, was successfully put forth in behalf of the charter, which, after a long and earnest debate, was granted by a large majority.

Although the charter secures to the Baptists the control of the College, yet it recognizes, repeatedly, and in the most unequivocal terms, the grand principles of religious toleration for which Rhode Island, through every stage in her social progress, has resolutely contended. Again and again, is the College denominated in the charter as "a liberal and catholic institution;" and, were this the proper place, it would be easy to show that the claim to this noble distinction has never been forfeited.

For several years after the charter was granted, the College, for obvious reasons, advanced but slowly towards the station which it was destined to attain. In September, 1765, Dr. Manning was appointed "President, and Professor of Languages, and other branches of learning, with full power to act in those capacities, at Warren or elsewhere." This is the language of the record, which, though not obnoxious to the charge of legal precision, seems to imply, on the part of the Corporation, no want of confidence in the variety of the President's attainments.

In the year 1766, President Manning commenced his course of collegiate instruction at Warren, where it was at first proposed that the College should be established. The first Commencement was held in that town, September, 1769, at which time a class of only seven was graduated. To this class belonged the Rev. Dr. William Rogers, a Baptist clergyman of some celebrity in his day, and the Hon. James Mitchell Varnum, an advocate of almost unrivalled powers of eloquence.

An important question soon arose, as to the most eligible place for erecting an edifice for the purposes of the new institution. Although this question divided the exertions of the friends of the College, yet it did not, perhaps, in the end, retard its growth. The original plan of establishing the College at Warren was adopted, we presume, mainly in reference to the convenience of Dr. Manning, who was connected with that town by interesting personal and official ties. The counties of Newport, Providence

and Kent, zealously interposed their claims to the advantage of which the county of Bristol had become the recipient; and it was not without a patient and formal hearing of all the arguments advanced in behalf of each of the competitors, that the Corporation, in the early part of the year 1770, decided "that the said edifice be built in the town of Providence, and there be continued forever." The Corporation, at the same time, appointed a committee to assure President Manning of their cordial approbation of his administration of the affairs of the College, to request him to continue in office, and to transfer his residence to Providence, on the removal of the institution to that town. The same committee were also authorized to endeavor to procure of Mr. Manning's church and congregation their consent to his removal. The cautious delicacy with which the Corporation interfered with his existing relations presents a somewhat grateful contrast to the unceremonious and otherwise questionable modes of procedure which, under similar circumstances, are now sometimes adopted.

The result of all these proceedings may be anticipated. In the course of the year 1770, the first college edifice, now University Hall, was erected in the town of Providence; and at the expense, it is understood, exclusively of citizens belonging to the town and county of Providence. The edifice was not at once completed; but, in May, 1770, President Manning removed thither, together with his official associates, and the undergraduates of the College. The first Commencement at Providence was held on the first Wednesday of September, 1770, when a class of only four was graduated. Of this number was the late Hon. Theodore Foster, senator in Congress from Rhode Island for the period of thirteen years, and familiarly known for his spirit of antiquarian research, and for the zeal with which he collected materials for a history of that State.

Dr. Manning now entered upon a theatre of enlarged and responsible action. The College was in its infancy, and demanded his parental supervision. Its funds were scanty, and needed to be recruited. Its actual system of discipline and instruction was imperfect, and required not only to be improved, but to be adapted to the new circumstances under which it was hereafter to be administered. To these important objects Dr. Manning devoted himself, with patience and energy, and with that spirit of self-denial which is essential to the success of great enterprises, and which great enterprises are apt to inspire. In the beneficent work of establishing, within the little colony of Rhode Island, "a public seminary for the education of youth in the vernacular and learned languages, and in the liberal arts and sciences," he was aided by the efficient coöperation of the Rev. Morgan Edwards, the Rev. Hezekiah Smith, and others of his clerical brethren. It is, however, perhaps not too much to say, that, but for the enlightened zeal and substantial liberality of a few eminent Baptist laymen, citizens of Providence, the College would have been slow in winning its way to general repute. These public-spirited men, though strangers themselves to the discipline of schools of learning, knew how to prize the benefits of high intellectual culture. Though self-educated, they were without a particle of hostility to the distinctions of learning or of that affected contempt for learned men with which the uncultivated sometimes seek to console their deficiencies. Moved by a generous ardor, they determined that their children and the children of their contemporaries should enjoy, to the remotest generations, opportunities for intellectual improvement denied to themselves. Well have they been repaid for their efforts in this good cause. Their activity and enterprise in the accumulation of

wealth are now well nigh forgotten ; but still fresh is the memory of all their deeds in behalf of science, and letters, and religion.

The permanent establishment of the College in Providence inspired its friends with renewed confidence in its ultimate success, and stimulated them to fresh endeavors to increase its funds, and to enlarge its means of instruction. In all these endeavors, as it would seem from the records of the College, the President was conspicuous. He recommended to the Corporation measures for the advancement of the College, and, in the laborious execution of those measures, he actively participated. As one among the many proofs of his desire to promote the interests of the institution over which he presided, and of the sacrifices which he was ready to make in that cause, we here record a fact communicated by the Hon. Asher Robbins :

“The President received a letter from England, soon after the peace in 1783, in which the writer gave it as his opinion, that if a person were sent out there, for that purpose, he might obtain donations to enlarge the funds of the College, and thereby extend its usefulness. This letter was communicated to the Corporation ; and the only objection to the plan was the uncertainty of success, while the expense would be considerable. Whereupon, the President volunteered to go on this mission, asking only indemnity for his actual expenses, and offering to trust to the contributions for that indemnity. This project was, however, unhappily defeated.”

Dr. Manning discharged the duties of his responsible office, with unwearied assiduity and with gratifying success, till the year 1776, when the college edifice became first a barrack for the militia, and afterwards a hospital for the French army commanded by Count Rochambeau. He was then compelled to suspend his collegiate occupations, till the close of the Revolutionary war in 1783. From 1776 to 1786, no degrees were conferred. This interval of relaxation from collegiate duty, Dr. Manning diligently employed in the labors of the ministry, and in various acts of social benevolence which the perils and distresses of that period in our national history prompted him to perform. The following instance of his humane disposition is related by the venerable John Howland, President of the Rhode Island Historical Society, in a short Memoir of Dr. Manning, published in the year 1815 :

“He enjoyed the confidence of the general commanding in this department, and in one instance in particular had all the benevolent feelings of his heart gratified, even at the last moment, after earnest entreaty, by obtaining from general Sullivan an order of reprieve for three men of the regular army who were sentenced to death by that inexorable tribunal, a court martial. The moment he obtained the order revoking the sentence, he mounted his horse at the general's door, and, by pushing him to his utmost speed, arrived at the place of execution at the instant the last act had begun which was to precipitate them into eternity. With a voice which none could disobey, he commanded the execution to stay, and delivered the general's order to the officer of the guard. The joy of the attending crowd seemed greater than that of the subjects of mercy ; they were called so suddenly to life from the last verge of death, they did not for a moment feel that it was a reality.”

Dr. Manning is now to be exhibited in a new character, and in new relations. Hitherto we have seen him ministering at the altar, or dispensing the oracles of wisdom amid the shades of the academy. We are now to note his career as a patriot statesman. In the following paragraph, Mr.

Howland relates the history of an important civil function which was confided to Dr. Manning, and by him most skilfully discharged :

“The repeated calls of the militia, while the enemy remained in this State, (Rhode Island,) operated with peculiar severity ; in some districts the ground could not be planted, and in others, the harvest was not reaped in season ; the usual abundance of the earth fell short, and he who had the best means of supply frequently had to divide his store with a suffering neighbor : In addition to this, laws existed in several States, prohibiting the transport of provisions beyond the State boundary. The plea for these restrictions was that there was danger of the enemy being supplied ; but the real cause was to retain the provisions for the purpose of furnishing their State's quota of troops, as the war was generally carried on by the energy of the governments of the individual States. These restrictions came with double weight on the citizens of Rhode Island, as a great part of the State was in the possession of the enemy, and the remainder was filled with those who had fled from the islands and the coasts for safety. These restrictions and prohibitions were variously modified, but under all their variations, which referred chiefly to the mode of executing the law, the grievance was the same. The governor and council of war of Rhode Island, wishing to give their language of remonstrance, a power of impression which paper could not be made to convey, commissioned Doctor Manning to repair to Connecticut, and represent, personally, to the government of that State our peculiar situation, and to confer with, and propose to them a different mode of procedure. The Doctor in this embassy obtained all that he desired ; the restrictions were removed, and, in addition to this, on his representation of the circumstances of the refugees from the islands, contributions, in money or provisions, were made in nearly all the parishes in the interior of Connecticut, and forwarded for their relief.”

The Articles of Confederation adopted by the United States in 1781, proved, as is well known, utterly inadequate to the purposes of government. Commercial embarrassments multiplied ; the public credit was impaired ; and the great interests of the nation, nay, even the whole political fabric was threatened with destruction. At this crisis of depression and alarm, Dr. Manning was, by an unanimous resolution of the General Assembly, appointed, in 1786, to represent the State of Rhode Island in the Congress of the United States. The story of this interesting event in the life of Dr. Manning is well told by Mr. Robbins, in the following extract from one of his letters to the author of this Memoir. It may not be amiss here to add, that these letters were written with no view to publication ; but that we have been kindly permitted, by the distinguished writer, to use them for the purpose of illustrating the character of his departed friend :

“Though he had other merits and ample for this appointment of delegate, I have no doubt the dignity and grace for which he was so remarkable, smoothed the way to it. It took place in this wise. There was a vacancy in the delegation, and the General Assembly, who were to fill it, were sitting in Providence. No one in particular had been proposed or talked of : One afternoon, Dr. Manning went to the State-house, to look in upon the Assembly, and see what was doing. His motive was curiosity merely. On his appearance there, he was introduced on the floor, and accommodated with a seat. Shortly after, Commodore Hopkins, who was then a member, rose and nominated President Manning as a delegate to Congress, and, thereupon, he was appointed, and, according to my recollection, unanimously. I recollect to have heard Commodore Hopkins say (it

was at the house of his brother, governor Hopkins where I shortly after met with him,) that the idea never entered his head till he saw the President enter and take his seat on the floor of the Assembly; and that the thought immediately struck him, that he would make a very fit member for that august body, the continental Congress.

“Congress under the old Confederation sat, as you know, in conclave; no report of their debates was published; how far Mr. Manning mingled in them, therefore, I cannot say. I recollect his speaking of one in which he participated (the subject I have forgotten) on account of a personal controversy to which it gave rise between him and a fiery young man, a delegate from Georgia, by the name, as I think, of Houston. This young man in his speech had reflected upon New England and her people. Mr. Manning repelled the attack, and by way of offset, drew a picture of Georgia and her people. This so nettled the young man that in his passion he threatened personal violence. The next day he appeared in Congress with a sword by his side. This produced, at once, a sensation in that Body the symptoms of which were so alarming, that he thought proper to withdraw, take off his sword, and send it home by his servant. In the course of the day he took an opportunity to meet with Mr. Manning, and to make him an apology.

“He must have given himself much to business then, as he seemed to be master of all the important questions which had been debated, and could give the arguments, pro and con, offered by the different speakers.

“The famous Dr. Johnson of Connecticut was a member at the same time, with whom Mr. Manning became intimate, and of whom he always spoke with admiration. The Doctor once paid him the compliment of holding the pen of a ready writer, which Mr. Manning very highly valued as coming from such a man. It was upon an occasion of drawing up a report for a committee of which both were members, and which report the Doctor professed to be much pleased with.”

On receiving the appointment of Delegate to Congress, Dr. Manning asked and obtained of the Corporation leave of absence from his collegiate duties, from March till September. During this interval, the Rev. Perez Fobes, at that time a Congregational clergyman of Raynham, Ms., and soon afterwards a Professor in the College, was appointed as Vice President. Dr. Manning returned at the time designated, and quietly resumed his clerical and collegiate duties.

Dr. Manning was an enlightened friend of social order and of all those paramount interests which it is the design of government to foster and protect. He saw how inefficient the Confederation had become; and he feared that, unless a system of government, endowed with more energy, and founded on a popular basis, were established, the blessings of union and independence could not long be preserved. Hence, he was an earnest advocate for the adoption of our present national constitution. As evidence of the profound interest which he felt in the momentous question which, in the year 1788, agitated the country, we take pleasure in quoting from Mr. Howland's Memoir, the subsequent passage:

“Dr. Manning was extremely solicitous for ratification. He viewed the situation of the country with all the light of a statesman and a philosopher; and, as a prudent and well informed citizen, he took his measures accordingly. He had saved the college funds through the fluctuations and storms of one revolution, and he now saw them dissipated and lost forever, unless the new form of government should be established. He knew that several clergymen with whom he was connected in the bonds of religious union

were members of the convention, and that they were generally opposed to the ratification. He therefore repaired to Boston, and attended the debates and proceedings of the convention. His most valued and intimate friend, the Rev. Doctor Stillman, was one of the twelve representatives of the town of Boston in the convention, and zealous for the adoption; and in their frequent intercourse with their friends, who were members, they endeavored to remove the objections of such as were in the opposition; in this they were assisted by the Rev. Doctor Smith, of Haverhill, who was also a Fellow of Rhode Island College, and ardently attached to its interests; with the Rev. Isaac Backus, who was a Delegate from the town of Middleborough, and considered one of the most powerful men of the anti-federal party; they were not able to succeed. The question of ratification was finally carried by a majority of nineteen, after a full and able discussion. The writer of these sketches well recollects the cordial congratulations with which Doctor Manning greeted his friends on the decision of this convention, after his return from Boston."

In connection with the facts stated by Mr. Howland, we cannot forbear to add an incident mentioned in an interesting communication from Dr. Waterhouse to the Rev. Prof. Elton, of Brown University. On the last day of the session of the Massachusetts Convention, and before the final question was taken, governor Hancock, the President, invited Dr. Manning to "close the solemn convocation with thanksgiving and prayer." Dr. Manning, though, as Dr. Waterhouse thinks, taken by surprise, immediately dropped on his knees, and poured out his heart in a strain of exalted patriotism and fervid devotion, which awakened in the assembly a mingled sentiment of admiration and awe. The impression which he made must have been extraordinary; for, says Dr. Waterhouse, who dined in a large company, after the adjournment, "the praise of Rev. Dr. Manning was in every mouth! Nothing," adds Dr. Waterhouse, "but the popularity of Dr. Stillman prevented the rich men of Boston from building a church for Dr. Manning's acceptance."

After his return from Congress, Dr. Manning sustained no political office, and, with the exception of his patriotic mission to Boston, we do not learn that, during the remainder of his life, he engaged conspicuously in the politics of the times. For politics, however, he had a decided taste, imbibed, it is presumed, amid the exciting controversies of the American Revolution. With governor Hopkins, whom Mr. Robbins denominates, "a living library of political knowledge," Dr. Manning maintained a familiar and confidential intercourse. This association probably quickened the generous interest which he felt in the public affairs of his country—an interest entirely without acrimony or a feverish thirst for personal distinction, and which, it is believed, he retained to the last.

The connection of Dr. Manning with the First Baptist church in Providence, as their pastor, was an important event in his life. Unwilling to break the continuity of the preceding narrative, we have refrained, thus far, from noticing, particularly, this event which opened to Dr. Manning a new province of labor and usefulness.

The First Baptist church in Providence was planted, according to governor Winthrop, in the year 1639; and it is the oldest Baptist church in America. With its history prior to the year 1770, we have, here, no concern. At that time, the Rev. Samuel Winsor was its pastor. Residing at a distance from the meeting-house, and finding the duties of his office too arduous for him, he made known to his people his earnest desire to be released from services which he could no longer perform, without infringing

his paramount obligations to his family. Dr. Manning, having recently become a resident in Providence, was formally invited to preach in Mr. Winsor's meeting-house. He accepted the invitation, and preached a sermon on a Sabbath which happened to be the day for the administration of the holy communion. Dr. Manning was invited by Mr. Winsor to partake this sacred and affecting ordinance. Several of the members of the church were, however, dissatisfied, that "the privilege of transient communion" should have been allowed to Dr. Manning. This dissatisfaction led to a series of church meetings, in which the majority, however, was, in every instance, found to be on the side of Dr. Manning. The ostensible objection urged by Mr. Winsor and his followers against Dr. Manning was "that he did not make imposition of hands a bar to communion, though he himself received it, and administered it to those who desired it." As the well-informed believed, the true cause of opposition to him was "his holding to singing in public worship, which was highly disgusting to Mr. Winsor!" It being found impossible to reconcile conflicting opinions in this matter, Mr. Winsor, and those who thought like him, withdrew from the church. Dr. Manning was then, in due form, appointed the pastor, *pro tempore*, or, to use his own language, "until there may be a more full disquisition of this matter, or time to seek other help; at least until time may prove whether it will be consistent with my other engagements, and for the general interest of religion."

These ecclesiastical dissensions are now all but forgotten; and, if remembered at all, they are remembered only as impressive admonitions to the fuller exercise of that charity which "beareth all things."

Under the pastoral care of Dr. Manning, the First Baptist church in Providence increased in numbers, efficiency, and evangelical zeal. The congregation requiring the accommodations of a larger house of worship, the spacious and beautiful edifice, which is now among the chief architectural ornaments of the city of Providence, was erected; and, in May, 1775, was opened for public worship. On that occasion, Dr. Manning preached a sermon from the following text—"This is none other but the house of God—and this is the gate of Heaven." He continued his ministry for many years; but, finding that his accumulating duties, as President of the College, would not permit him to do justice to his people, he repeatedly and earnestly requested them to seek for a proper person to succeed him. "At length, in a most honorable way, he resigned his pastoral office." On the last Sabbath in April, 1791, a few months only before his death, he preached to his people, his farewell sermon. It affected them to tears. Little did they dream, however, that the voice which now melted them into sadness, was now uttering, indeed, its last farewell; and that they were so soon to water with the tears of a lasting sorrow, the grave of their counsellor and friend.

We now approach the close of Dr. Manning's valuable life. At the annual Commencement in 1790, as if in prophetic anticipation of his approaching death, he requested the Corporation to direct their attention towards some suitable person as his successor. This unwelcome duty, was, however, suddenly forced upon them. On the Sabbath morning of July 24, 1791, while uttering the voice of prayer around the domestic altar, he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, in which he remained, but with imperfect consciousness, till the ensuing Friday, when he expired, aged fifty-three years.

The sudden death of a man who had filled, for so many years, such various and commanding stations, produced, throughout the community, sen-

sations of no common sorrow. All felt that a wise and good man had departed in the midst of his strength, and usefulness, and honors. His fellow-citizens sorrowed, as if for a public benefactor. The people to whom he had so long and so faithfully preached the words of eternal life, mourned that they should see his face no more. His pupils looked in awe upon him, as he lay in the deep and unalterable repose of death, and they sighed to think, that never again should they hang upon the accents of their "guide, philosopher and friend."

The Corporation immediately assembled, and the death of the President was announced by the Chancellor. Among other demonstrations of respect and affection for the deceased, a Committee was appointed to superintend the funeral, and was authorized to defray the expenses from the funds of the College.

On the day next after his death, the remains of Dr. Manning were conveyed from his mansion-house to the College Hall, where the funeral solemnities were performed by the Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, at that time the pastor of a Congregational church in Providence, and one of the Fellows of the College. The funeral, though a public one, was no empty pageant. Multitudes flocked to the College to look, for the last time, upon a face which had so often beamed upon them in kindness; and multitudes followed him to the grave which was so soon to hide him forever from their sight.

On the ensuing Sabbath, eloquent and appropriate funeral discourses were delivered, in the First Baptist meeting-house, by the Rev. Jonathan Maxey and the Rev. Perez Fobes, both of whom were associated with Dr. Manning in the government and instruction of the College.

Over the grave of Dr. Manning, the Corporation lost no time in erecting a monument, on which is inscribed a faithful record of his worth as a statesman, scholar, gentleman and Christian.

Before we dismiss our task, it remains for us to add a few particulars relating to the personal appearance, habits, and manners of Dr. Manning, and then, without attempting an analysis of his character, to invite attention to the ability and success with which he discharged his various duties.

The advantages of a most attractive and impressive exterior,* Dr. Manning possessed in no common measure. His person was graceful and commanding, and his countenance was "remarkably expressive of sensibility, dignity and cheerfulness." In his youth, he was noted for bodily strength and activity. These qualities he was accustomed to display in the athletic exercises common among the young men of his day, and, in his mature years, in some of the severer labors of husbandry. Unpoetical as the occupation may seem, he sometimes made his own stone wall; and in the use of the scythe, he acknowledged no superior among the best trained laborers in the meadow. To his habits of vigorous muscular exercise may be attributed, in part, his excellent constitution, and the sound health, which, till within a few years of his death, he uninterruptedly enjoyed.

The voice of Dr. Manning was not among the least of his attractions. To its extraordinary compass and harmony may, in no small degree, be ascribed the vivid impression which he made upon other minds. How

* The likeness of Dr. Manning, accompanying this memoir, was engraved from a portrait, which has long been in the possession of Brown University. When this portrait was painted, or by whom, we are unable to state with confidence. Those, however, who remember Dr. Manning insist that it conveys but a very imperfect idea of his remarkably prepossessing countenance.

potent is the fascination of a musical and expressive voice! How sad to think, that, in these days of almost universal accomplishment, this mighty instrument for touching the heart of man should be comparatively neglected! When, in connection with a more careful culture of our moral being, the voice shall be trained to a more perfect manifestation of its powers, a charm, hitherto unfelt, will be lent to the graceful pleasures of life, and an influence of almost untried efficacy to its serious occasions.

The manners of Dr. Manning were not less prepossessing than his personal appearance. They seemed to be the expression of that dignity and grace for which he was so remarkable, and of which he appeared to be entirely unconscious—a dignity and grace, not artificial or studied in the least, but the gift of pure nature. He was easy without negligence, and polite without affectation. Unlike many of the distinguished men in our country, he was too well bred to adopt an air of patronage and condescension towards his inferiors either in talent or in station. As a Christian, also, he felt the importance of cultivated manners, and he acknowledged no necessary connection between the sternest fidelity to principle and the precision and austerity with which it is sometimes found associated. Like the venerable Wheelock, the founder of Dartmouth College, he abhorred all religious profession “which was not marked with good manners.”*

In the intercourse of social and domestic life, his amiable disposition and versatile colloquial powers, rendered him an engaging and instructive companion. “He was,” says Mr. Robbins, “of the most happy disposition and temperament—always cheerful—much inclined to society and conversation; in conversation more disposed to pleasantry than seriousness; fond of anecdote, especially if illustrative of character, of which he had a store.” Indeed, so far as personal appearance, address, manners, and voice may be considered, it is given to few men to leave behind them so strong and so grateful an impression.

In the discipline and instruction of the College, Dr. Manning was eminently successful. He secured the obedience of his pupils, rather by the gentleness of parental persuasion than by the sternness of official authority. His instructions, which were always oral, never failed to command their attention, and to leave upon their minds a distinct impression. Classical learning was his forte, and to the classics and their cognate branches, he principally confined himself. Relative to this topic, Mr. Robbins furnishes an apt reminiscence. “I well recollect to have heard the students of the classes whom he chose to take through Longinus particularly, often speak with admiration of his comments upon that author, and of the happy and copious illustrations he gave of the principles from which Longinus deduces the sublime. I could readily believe the admiration was merited; for I know he had paid great attention to the general principles of oratory, and particularly to those of elocution, of which he was an admirable preceptor.”

It must not be understood, however, that Dr. Manning was unacquainted with the severer sciences. This was not the case. As, however, they were less agreeable to his taste than the belleslettres, he naturally devoted his attention mainly to the cultivation of the latter. That he was a profound original thinker, or that he was a man of recondite and critical learning, is not pretended. His reading was somewhat extensive, but it was rather desultory than systematic. Indeed, between the care of the

* See Memoir of Rev. Dr. Wheelock, by Dr. Allen, published in American Quarterly Register for August, 1837.

college, the care of his church, and the care of his family,* he had not much leisure for acquisition. He was fond of conversing with those who were enabled to devote more time to study, and he sought to profit from their communications. With the late Mr. Joseph Brown, of Providence, who, says Mr. Robbins, "was profound in mechanical philosophy and in electricity," he cultivated a familiar intercourse.

The wisdom and success with which Dr. Manning directed, for the term of twenty-six years, the affairs of the College, may be inferred from the preceding narrative. Amidst many discouragements, he raised it from a very humble beginning at Warren, to a station of acknowledged respectability and usefulness. His pupils loved and revered him. Most of them are no more; but the few, who remain, still speak of him with an enthusiasm which time has mellowed—not destroyed. Of this love and reverence, an interesting proof was given, a few years since, by the Hon. Nicholas Brown, of Providence. At his own expense, he built for the University which bears his name, a beautiful edifice, and to perpetuate the remembrance of his early instructor and friend, he gave to it the name of MANNING HALL.

The dignity and grace with which Dr. Manning was accustomed to preside at the annual Commencements is happily illustrated by the following anecdote derived from Mr. Robbins: "I recollect that at one of our Commencements, a French gentleman of distinction, (I think he bore some title of nobility,) was present. He sat by Dr. Waterhouse, and was, I think, introduced and presented by him. They conversed together in Latin, either, as being learned men, they chose to converse in a learned language, or as the Frenchman being less perfect in English and the Doctor in French, they found it more easy to converse in Latin. Struck with this natural dignity and grace, the Frenchman whispered to the Doctor—*Natalis præsidere* (born to preside.) I heard this from Doctor Waterhouse himself, the next day."

For the times in which he lived, Dr. Manning may be considered as an eminent divine, and an effective preacher. He was a Calvinistic Baptist, but without a particle of sectarian bigotry. Indeed, he was singularly exempt from any of that narrowness and rigidity which professional pursuits are apt to produce, more or less, in most men. He preached the truths of the Gospel, with simplicity and fervor—with a fidelity which alarmed the presumptuous, and with a gentleness which attracted the humble. He spared not the whitened sepulchre, but it was his delight to heal the bruised reed. To Mr. Robbins, we here leave the task of completing our exhibition of Dr. Manning as a preacher and divine.

"Dr. Manning was the acknowledged head of the Baptist clergy of his time. He was so considered in England as well as in this country. He corresponded with all the most eminent of his denomination in England. I have seen some of their letters to him. I recollect that one informed him

* The number and variety of Dr. Manning's cares may be inferred from the following amusing extract from a recent letter, written by Dr. Waterhouse to a gentleman in Providence: "I never shall forget what Dr. Manning, in great good humor, told me were among his trying 'experiences' He told me that his salary was only £80 per annum, and that, for this pittance, he performed all the duties of President of the College; heard two classes recite, every day; listened to complaints, foreign and domestic, from undergraduates and their parents of both sexes, and answered them, now and then, by letter; waited, generally, on all transient visitors into college, &c. &c. Nor was this all. 'I made,' said Dr. Manning, 'my own garden and took care of it; repaired my dilapidated walls; went nearly every day to market; preached twice a week, and sometimes oftener; attended, by solicitation, the funeral of every baby that died in Providence; visited the sick of my own Society, and, not unfrequently, the sick of other Societies; made numerous parochial visits, the poorest people exacting the longest, and, in case of any seeming neglect, finding fault the most.'" Amid all these perplexing cares, which allowed him but scanty time for premeditating his sermons, we have the testimony of Dr. Waterhouse for adding that "the honorable and worthy man never complained."

that his communication upon the state of the Baptist churches in this country, and their prospects, had been published in England and extensively circulated there. It was at the time when they were contending in some of the States for independence of the State religious establishment, and for exemption from contribution to that establishment.

“ At that time, certain polemics of England made war upon the distinguishing doctrine of the Baptists. This called forth defensive publications on their part. These were sent to Dr. Manning. I recollect that some of these were written with great animation, and, according to the fashion of the polemics of that day, with not a little vituperation. The Doctor of course thought the argument on his side complete and triumphant.

“ He was well versed in all the learning in the controversy about their distinguishing tenet—as to the subject and mode of baptism. I believe he had read all the books extant upon that subject; but the learned Dr. Gill was his favorite author. His writings he considered a treasure of Biblical learning.

“ His pulpit discourses were all *ex tempore*, because he believed this mode, though written compositions were more interesting to scholars, to be more interesting and more efficacious to a mixed congregation made up of all classes of society. His manner was earnest, but never vehement. He made no effort at oratory, or at display of learning. It is true, he occasionally touched and dwelt upon some doctrinal point; but it was incidentally, as it were, and subordinate to some practical view, the scope of his discourse.”

What has already been said supersedes the necessity of additional remark respecting Dr. Manning's capacity as a statesman. He was formed rather for the theatre of action than for the shades of academic seclusion; and, had he devoted himself exclusively to politics, he would unquestionably have stood foremost among the public men of his times.

On the Christian character of Dr. Manning his life is the best eulogy. His religion was wrought into the texture of his moral being. It exerted a pervading and habitual control, regulating his principles, tastes, habits and opinions. It exhibited no disproportions, it delighted in no bustle; it was reflected in no strong lights. In life it was his informing spirit—in death his sustaining hope.

Our task is finished. We cannot, however, quit it, without commending to the young men of our country the example of JAMES MANNING. How diligently and cheerfully did he labor for the good of others! Thus laboring, what valuable results did he accomplish! And all this, too, without the aids of abstruse learning, without ample leisure for self-cultivation, with powers distracted by care, and spirits perhaps saddened by economical solicitude. He labored, be it remembered, not for himself, but for others, and, in language breathing a holier inspiration than that of poetry, may be conveyed the GRAND MORAL OF HIS LIFE—

“ Love thyself last,
Let all the ends thou aim'st at, be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's ”

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF EARLY GRADUATES AT BROWN UNIVERSITY.

AMONG the pupils of President Manning, of Brown University, were many gifted young men. Several of them arrived at eminence in life, and when a history of Rhode Island shall be given to the world, their names will be recorded as among the most distinguished of her sons. We have not the means, and this is not the place, to do full justice to these men, but we subjoin a few brief notices of some of them, by way of appendix to the life of their venerated Preceptor.

JAMES M. VARNUM.

General JAMES MITCHELL VARNUM, was born in Dracut, Ms., 1749, and he graduated at Rhode Island College, in 1769. While an undergraduate, he indicated a remarkable capacity for learning, and although somewhat dissipated in his habits, he made handsome acquisitions. After completing his professional studies, he established himself as a legal practitioner in the town of East Greenwich, R. I. He rose rapidly to distinction at the bar; and, as an advocate, stood without a rival. The Hon. Asher Robbins shall describe his powers of eloquence: "I have heard him speak in our courts and in our legislature. He spoke without effort, and without gesture, in one steady stream of utterance, but with tones well modulated. He was very unequal; at times, careless and incorrect in language, and common-place in thought, and, at times, extremely eloquent, abounding in happy turns of thought, and striking beauties of expression. His eloquence appeared to me to be the gift of nature, not at all prepared; and to come upon him by fits, as it were, by inspiration." In 1777, he was appointed a Brigadier General in the revolutionary army; but after some service, he in 1779 resigned his commission. In 1786, he was a delegate to Congress from his adopted State, and in 1787, he was appointed a Judge of the Northwestern Territory. He died at Marietta, Ohio, in the year 1790, at the early age of forty. In closing this sketch of a very uncommon man, a remark made several years since by the celebrated Thomas Paine to the Hon. Nathan F. Dixon of Rhode Island, may not inappropriately be quoted. Meeting Mr. Dixon, casually, at a public house in Stonington, Ct., Paine made inquiries respecting Gen. Varnum, with whose powers, as an advocate, he was not unacquainted, adding, "I have heard the most distinguished orators in the British Parliament and in the French Convention, but I have never heard one superior in powers of eloquence to Gen. Varnum." Paine, though a man of most abandoned principles and profligate life, was, in this matter, no incompetent critic.

SAMUEL WARD.

Colonel SAMUEL WARD, of the revolutionary army, was born in Westerly, R. I., in the year 1756. He was prepared for college under the immediate care of his accomplished father, the late Gov. Ward, of Rhode Island. In the year 1771 he graduated at the early age of fifteen. Soon afterwards, the country was agitated by its mighty struggle for independence. With youthful enthusiasm he embarked in the perilous contest. At the early age of eighteen we find him in command of a company, and soon afterwards he accompanied Arnold and his gallant associates, in their march through the unexplored wilderness to Quebec. In this march, they encountered almost insupportable fatigues, and suffered dreadful privations. To appease the torments of hunger, they actually subsisted on dogs and reptiles, and, what is more affecting still, they devoured even their shoes, and the leather of their cartridge boxes! At

the attack on Quebec, captain Ward was made prisoner, but was exchanged the following year. It does not comport with the plan of these Notes, to trace his eventful and brilliant military career, with the particularity of the historian. It should, however, be added, that he commanded a regiment in the celebrated retreat from Rhode Island, although he was not commissioned as a Lieutenant Colonel until the next year. At the termination of the war, Col. Ward retired from the army, and engaged in mercantile pursuits. He established himself in the city of New York, and for a time, his high mercantile probity and intelligence were rewarded with ample success. He ultimately, however, experienced the vicissitudes incident to commerce, and a season of disaster forced him to make a voyage to Europe, for the purpose of accommodating his affairs. He happened to be in Paris when Louis XVI. was beheaded by those ferocious actors in the drama of the French Revolution, who perpetrated the worst crimes under the sacred name of liberty. On his return to his native land, Col. Ward retired from business to a farm in East Greenwich, R. I., where he resided till about the year 1817, when, desiring to be nearer to his sons, several of whom had embarked in business in New York, he was induced to remove to a farm in the vicinity of that metropolis. Here he lived, for several years, in the enjoyment of some of the best blessings of life—a serene conscience, filial love, and the spontaneous homage of all who had the pleasure to know him. Upon the death of his wife, a daughter of the late Gov. Greene of Rhode Island, he removed to the city of New York, where, after a residence of a few years, he closed his useful and honorable life, in the year 1832, aged seventy-five years. Col. Ward, though amply qualified for the most responsible duties of civil life, could seldom be induced to emerge from his modest seclusion. In 1786, he was one of the Commissioners from Rhode Island to the Convention which assembled at Annapolis, Md., for the purpose of considering the state of trade, and the propriety of a uniform system of commercial relations. Col. Ward was on his way to Annapolis, when, hearing that the Convention had adjourned, he returned to his home. There is also another passage in the life of Col. Ward, which, however it may suit the passions and the prejudices of the times to misrepresent it, will, in the judgment of posterity, impair, in no degree, his titles to the respect and the confidence of his countrymen. Together with George Cabot, Harrison Gray Otis, Nathan Dane, Roger Minot Sherman, and other able and patriotic men, he was a member of the Hartford Convention. This is a topic, however, which, although we have no desire to shun it, may be thought to belong more properly to politics than to literary history. We cannot close this imperfect sketch of Col. Ward, without adding that he was a ripe classical scholar, a gentleman of most winning urbanity of manners, and a man of sterling intellect, and unblemished honor.

SOLOMON DROWN.

SOLOMON DROWN, M. D., was born in Providence, in the year 1753. He graduated at the age of twenty, and soon after engaged in the study of medicine. After obtaining his medical degree, he visited Europe, for the purpose of completing his professional education. On his return to Providence, he practised medicine in that town till he, shortly afterwards, removed to Ohio. He did not remain there long, but again returned to Providence, where he remained till 1792, when ill health compelled him once more to migrate. After residing in West Pennsylvania nine years, he returned in 1801, to Rhode Island, and settled in the town of Foster, where he passed the remainder of his days, in professional and agricultural pursuits, and in the cultivation of his taste for botany and for elegant letters. In 1811, he was appointed Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany in Brown University, and for two or three seasons he delivered lectures to a class of medical pupils. He also lectured on botany to the undergraduates of Brown University, and to a private class of citizens. He died in 1834, at the advanced age of eighty-one years. Botany was his favorite pursuit, and he directed his attention, not more to the philosophy of the science, than to its practical uses in agriculture and medicine. He was a

member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and an honorary member of several other learned bodies. His occasional addresses which have been published, are creditable to him as a man of taste and varied acquisitions. In 1825, he published the "Farmer's Guide," a work of great practical value to the agriculturist. Dr. Drown, after all, was not well fitted for the active pursuits of life. He had a mind prone to contemplation, and had he been the incumbent of a scholarship in an English University, it is not too much to say, that his genius, under circumstances thus congenial to the exercise of its powers, would have exhibited itself in some work which "the world would not willingly let die."

BARNABAS BINNEY.

BARNABAS BINNEY, M. D. This gentleman was among the earliest pupils of Dr. Manning. He died ere he had reached the prime of manhood; but he lived long enough to leave upon the hearts of those who best knew and most loved him, an enduring record of his worth. Responding to our solicitations, a lady, one of Dr. Binney's immediate descendants, has kindly favored us with the following sketch of his life and character, which it gives us great pleasure to present to the public. It is the offering of affection, but without exaggeration; a discriminating and eloquent tribute to virtues upon which hath long been placed, the seal of immortal life.

"The early death of Dr. Binney, during the infancy of his children, and the death of their mother which succeeded it, have left his descendants but few particulars of his youthful days. His short career, however, is still regarded by surviving friends, with the most animated respect and affectionate admiration; and if they fail to collect and combine the minute circumstances which aided in the formation of his distinguished excellence; if they cannot refer to all the methods of culture which contributed to his future worth and accomplishments, they know enough to perceive in general, that the discipline of such a character as his must have commenced under enlightened judgment, and exemplary regularity; while they would be ready to admit, that he possessed a natural vigor, which, had he not commanded advantages, would soon have surmounted the want of them.

"Barnabas, son of Barnabas and Avis Binney, was born in Boston, in the year 1751. His father, a man of active and energetic temper, was extensively engaged in commerce, to which, it is supposed he would have bred his son. His mother, of the family name of Ings, was a lady of uncommon cultivation and piety; and to her early and perhaps imperceptible influence, we may ascribe the decided bias of her son's mind to liberal studies. As a child, he exhibited an acute sensibility to the beauties of English literature, and soon desired to pursue the stream up to its ancient and inexhaustible fountains.

"From associations of friendship, probably, Mr. Binney was entered a student of Rhode Island College, instead of the older institution near his paternal home. In that honored seat of learning, he devoted himself to all that was then taught, and attracted the esteem of the amiable President Manning, who often spoke of him as a youth of the finest abilities, and most persevering diligence. In 1774, he received the highest distinction of his class, and wrote and delivered an English oration, which was immediately published, and long considered, near his native soil, with the most favorable estimate of its merit. At the close of his collegiate life, he appears to have directed his views to the study of medicine, to which, indeed, a residence of some months with an eminent physician in London, had, while yet a youth, confirmed his preference. To this end, he assiduously attended the lectures of the Philadelphia school, and in due time, received from it a degree. The death of his father in Demarara, recalled him to Boston, where his care of the family mansion and effects, then, and long afterwards, indicative of liberality and comfort, detained him for some time. In 1777, he returned to Philadelphia, and intermarried with the eldest daughter of Mr. Henry Woodrow, originally of Monmouth County, New Jersey. To this event, he ever believed

himself to be largely a debtor for all the important benefits of a well-assorted and most happy connection. The state of the times, and the prospect of professional advancement, induced him to accept the post of senior surgeon of one of the hospitals for the American army. In this station, he remained for more than three years, and acquired both experience and reputation. At the conclusion of the peace, he established himself in Philadelphia, and commenced his walk of city practice. His success was less dilatory than usual; and few young physicians have conciliated a more thorough confidence and esteem, or, in a few years, laid a better foundation for both distinction and emolument. His health, however, declined, and in the course of 1786, he relinquished his professional duties, and arranged his private affairs with the utmost precision and order. In the hope of restoration, more with his friends than with himself, he sat out, accompanied by his wife, for the Berkeley Springs of Virginia. There, after a few desponding weeks, his strength failed, and he determined to return and die at home. He lived only to reach the house of a friend on the way; and after a few hours, passed in the utterance of deep tenderness to his wife and children, and of piety and resignation to the will of God, on the 21st of June, 1787, he closed his mortal existence.

“Here, the scant notices of his life are expended, and the few points, no way remarkable, perhaps, on which affection or kindred could linger, are lost by the indistinctness of distance. But the memory of Dr. Binney, deserves a tribute beyond the mere entries of time and place. His attainments, and his embellishments, were much above the general state of improvement. His fine intellectual powers—his various and elegant knowledge—his refined and polished manners, would alone have given him elevation; while strength of principle—decision and energy of action—sensibility and tenderness, made a combination of qualities engaging to all, and wholly influential and commanding in the circle of domestic friends. If a fault could be suspected in a character so finely constituted, and so richly adorned, it arose from what David Hume has happily discussed in one of his essays, and called “A Delicacy of Passion,” which rendered him intensely susceptible of pain, or of enjoyment—of honor, or of dishonor—of the very threatenings of moral disorder—almost, of external negligence. He indeed, “felt a stain like a wound,” and aware of his sensitive and vivid perceptions, habitually put forth his vigilance to control them, and to defend the passes to uneasiness, which his better judgment pronounced to be dangerous.

“Dr. Binney possessed an ardent love of letters, which neither business nor illness could long estrange. He wrote with ease and elegance, and cherished both the taste and the talent for poetical composition. He was intimately connected in friendship with some of the first men of his time, and allied by the warmest personal attachment to the lamented young Gen. Warren of Boston, of whom, it is said, to his closing days, he fondly spoke, as of a model of worth. He celebrated his generous self-sacrifice and untimely fall, in some beautiful stanzas, alike illustrative of his own devotion to the cause of civil liberty, and of his friendship and veneration for the accomplished soldier.”

To the above interesting sketch we have nothing to add, except the remark, that academical distinctions seem to be a sort of *heir loom* in the family of the Binneys. Dr. Binney graduated at Rhode Island College, in 1774; his son, the Hon. Horace Binney, graduated at Harvard, in 1797; his grandson, Horace Binney, Jr., Esq., graduated at Yale, in 1828. Each received the highest honors of his class.

SAMUEL EDDY.

Hon. SAMUEL EDDY, LL. D., was born in Johnston, R. I. He graduated in 1787, and was a classmate and friend of Dr. Maxcy, afterwards President of the College. He read law, but never practised it. In 1798, he was elected by the people, Secretary of the State of Rhode Island, and was re-elected to that office without opposition, for twenty-one years in succession. Resigning the Secretaryship, he was elected, for three terms, a Representative in Congress from his native State. He subsequently sustained the office of Chief Justice of

the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, for eight years, and till sickness compelled him to resign it. Judge Eddy is still living,* and is justly respected for his uprightness and intelligence, and for the extent and variety of his attainments. He is no debater, but he writes with uncommon purity, accuracy and force. To several branches of natural science he has devoted much of his leisure, and he has made valuable collections of specimens to illustrate them. The Transactions of the Massachusetts Historical Society are enriched with several contributions from his pen.

JONATHAN MAXCY.

Rev. JONATHAN MAXCY, D. D., was born in Attleborough, Ms., in 1768. He graduated in 1787, and was, the same year, appointed one of the College Tutors. In 1791, he was appointed Professor of Divinity; and, in September, 1792, he was elected President of the College, in the place of Dr. Manning. He was about the same time ordained as the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence. In 1802, he resigned the Presidentship of Rhode Island College, having been elected President of Union College, at Schenectady, N. Y. Here he remained till 1804, when he removed to Columbia, S. C., having been chosen the first President of the South Carolina College. Over this institution he continued to preside till his death, in 1820, aged fifty-two years. In 1801, Harvard University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Several of his Oration, Sermons, and Baccalaureate Addresses have been published. In justice to his fame, they ought to be collected and preserved in some enduring form. Dr. Maxcy was a highly gifted man, an accomplished instructor, and a most eloquent preacher. May it not be long, ere some of his friends shall seek to rescue from oblivion the fast perishing memorials of his brilliant and commanding intellect!

JAMES BURRILL.

HON. JAMES BURRILL, LL. D., was born in Providence, in 1772. He was prepared for college by William Wilkinson, Esq., then an eminent classical and mathematical teacher in that town. He graduated at the early age of sixteen, and after completing his professional studies, he commenced, at the age of nineteen, the practice of the law in his native town. So rapid was his rise at the bar that, at the age of twenty-five, he was elected, by the people, to the responsible office of Attorney-General, and this office he continued to hold, amid the vicissitudes and competitions of party, for about sixteen years, until bodily infirmity compelled him to retire from the bar. In 1816, he was elected Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island; and, a few months afterwards, a Senator in Congress. He attended only four sessions of that body, his valuable life having been prematurely terminated by a pulmonary disease, Dec. 25, 1820, in the 49th year of his age. During his short career in Congress, Mr. Burrill won for himself a very high rank. To the Senate of the United States there perhaps never had belonged a more useful legislator or a more practical statesman. All who knew Mr. Burrill marvelled at the opulence of his resources, and at his power to command them at pleasure. In the operations of his mind there was no indication of excess, of febleness, or of confusion. On the contrary, he was always judicious, luminous, and forcible—master of an infinite variety of facts and principles, and ever ready in applying them. He seldom wrote, although he was capable of writing well; and it is sad to think that his fame, as a lawyer and as a statesman, must soon become only a matter of dim, traditional recollection.

JAMES FENNER.

HON. JAMES FENNER, LL. D., the son of the late Governor Arthur Fenner, of Rhode Island, was born in Providence, in the year 1771. He graduated in 1789, with the highest honors of his class. He early formed a taste for politics, and to that taste his reading and habits of life have been conformed. In 1804,

* Judge Eddy departed this life, on the 3d of February, 1833, several weeks after these Notices were sent to the Publisher.

he was elected, by the legislature of his native State, a Senator in Congress. In 1807, he resigned this high office, and was elected by his fellow-citizens Governor of Rhode Island, for four successive years. After several years passed in retirement, he was again elected Governor in the year 1824; and he remained in office for seven years. Governor Fenner is still living, in the enjoyment of an ample patrimony, and in the full possession of all his powers. Though a private citizen, he still interests himself warmly in public affairs; and he continues to exert an influence which vigorous talent, strong impulses, and direct purposes never fail to command.

ASA MESSER.

REV. ASA MESSER, D. D., LL. D., was born in Methuen, Ms., in the year 1769. He graduated in 1790, and soon afterwards joined the First Baptist church in Providence, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Maxcy. In 1792, he was licensed by this church to preach, and, in 1801, he received ordination. He was elected a Tutor in 1791, and remained in that office till he was elected, in 1796, Professor of the learned languages. In 1799, he was appointed Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; and this station he continued to hold till the resignation of Dr. Maxcy, in 1802, when he was chosen President of the College. For twenty-four years, he presided over its affairs; diligently and efficiently participating in the duties of instruction and supervising, with no common practical sagacity, its disordered finances. During his administration, the College continued to flourish. An increased number of pupils resorted thither, and, at no antecedent or subsequent period in its history, have the classes ever been so large. After having been connected with the College, either as a pupil or an officer, for the term of nearly forty years, Dr. Messer, in the year 1826, resigned the office of President. Possessing a handsome competence, the fruit in part of his habitual frugality, he was enabled to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of independent leisure. After his retirement from collegiate toils, his fellow-citizens of Providence elected him, for several years, to responsible municipal trusts; and these trusts he discharged with his characteristic punctuality and uprightness. Dr. Messer died, after a short illness, and to the inexpressible regret of his family, in the year 1836, aged sixty-five years. His religious opinions, especially for the last twenty years of his life, corresponded nearly to those of the General Baptists of England. He was a strenuous advocate for the supremacy of the Scriptures, and for their entire sufficiency in matters of faith and practice. As a preacher, he wanted the attractive graces of elocution; but he never failed to address to the understanding and the conscience the most clear and cogent exhibitions of the great practical truths of the Bible. For what is termed polite literature he had no particular fondness, but he was a good classical scholar, and was well versed in the Mathematics, and the several branches of Natural Philosophy. In moral science, also, we have known few better reasoners or more successful teachers. In fine, Dr. Messer was remarkable, rather for the vigor than the versatility of his powers; rather, for solid acquirement, than for captivating embellishments; rather for wisdom than for wit; rather for grave processes of ratiocination, than for the airy frolics of fancy. In 1824, he received from Harvard University the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, having previously received the same degree from his *Alma Mater*, and that of Doctor of Laws from the University of Vermont.

JONATHAN RUSSELL.

HON. JONATHAN RUSSELL, LL. D., was born in Providence in 1771. He graduated, in 1791, with the highest honors of a class distinguished for talents and scholarship. While an undergraduate, he cultivated with ardor that talent for writing, which, in after life, won for him such merited distinction. His genius and taste were eminently favorable to elegance and eloquence in composition. He eagerly received all instruction upon the subject of his favorite study, and to these instructions he added the discipline of practice and a familiar intercourse with the best models, ancient and modern. Mr. Russell was bred

to the law, but he never engaged in the practice. He subsequently embarked in the pursuits of commerce, and visited Europe on some commercial enterprise. His predominant taste, however, was always for politics, and, in political science he was well versed. He occupied, in the service of his country, several high and responsible diplomatic stations, and he performed their duties with acknowledged ability. For several years, he represented the government of his country as Minister Plenipotentiary at Stockholm; and was one of the five commissioners who negotiated the treaty of peace with England, at Ghent, in the year 1814. On his return to his native country, he settled at Mendon, Ms., and was soon afterwards elected a Representative in Congress from the district in which he resided. For several of the last years of his life, his health declined, and, in 1832, he died at Milton, Ms., aged sixty-one years. Mr. Russell had no skill as a forensic or parliamentary speaker; but, as a writer, he possessed versatile and eminent gifts. He wrote, not only with facility, but with uncommon elegance and force—and, when the subject permitted, with a caustic severity not often surpassed. Excepting the Fourth of July Oration, which he delivered in Providence, in 1800, (and which has passed through many editions,) and his diplomatic correspondence while in Paris, London and Stockholm, Mr. Russell has left scarcely any permanent record of the various intellectual gifts and accomplishments for which he was distinguished.

WILLIAM HUNTER.

HON. WILLIAM HUNTER, LL. D., was born in Newport, R. I. He graduated in 1791, and shared, with Mr. Russell, the highest honors of his class. Soon afterwards, he went to England, and read law in the Temple, and attended the courts in Westminster Hall. On his return, he was admitted to the bar, and immediately commenced the practice of law. He soon rose to eminence in his profession, and, till his election to the Senate of the United States, in 1811, he was one of the most successful and eloquent advocates at the Rhode Island bar. While a member of the Senate it was a matter of regret that he seldom engaged in debate; but, on one or two occasions, he delivered elaborate speeches which obtained for him a very high rank as a statesman and as a parliamentary orator. In 1821, Mr. Hunter's term of office as Senator having expired, he resumed the practice of his profession, and continued it, till the government of his country, in the year 1834, appointed him Charge d'Affairs at the court of Brazil. Since that time, he has resided at Rio Janeiro, faithfully and ably discharging the high diplomatic functions which have been intrusted to him. Perhaps no man in Rhode Island has enjoyed the advantages of a more accomplished education than has Mr. Hunter; and that little commonwealth can probably boast no mind more rich and elegant—none more various in its tastes, or more capable of extracting from art and from letters their nobler inspirations.





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